

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

T/G/B
Eschatology
Thanatology
Ecclesiology
Israelology
Dispensationalism
Doxology
Hodology
Soteriology
Hamartiology
Natural Law
Anthropology
Angelology
Pneumatology
Christology
Paterology
Trinitarianism
Cosmology
Theology Proper
Bibliology
Natural Theology
5: Hermeneutics
4: Linguistics
3: Epistemology 32 - Existence 50 - History 30
2:Metaphysics 32 - Trans. 50
1: Reality - Logic 32, - Truth 32

Opening: The greatest issue in life is living with and for God by knowledge and by love: John 8:32, 3:21; Matt. 22:36-37; Matt. 6:21-24; Acts 13:22.

2 Parts to Bible class:

- (1) 20 minutes on spiritual & philosophical foundations required for a Christian worldview: more on Baconian-Reidian inductive “scientism.”
- (2) 1 hour on virtue and metaphysics of love in relation to the will and the intellect.

The spiritual life and the importance of virtue,

2 Pet. 1:5-10 “apply all diligence in your faith:

1. Faith (πίστις)
2. Excellence (ἀρετή)
3. Knowledge (γνῶσις)
4. Self-control (ἐγκράτεια)
5. Perseverance (ὑπομονή)
6. Godliness (εὐσέβεια).
7. Affection for fellow believers (φιλαδελφία)
8. Love (ἀγάπη).

2 Pet. 1:8: *For it these virtues are yours and increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the epignosis (intense, accurate, transcendent, experiential) knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Neither experiential, no intense knowledge of Christ, nor any spiritual experience necessarily translates to a growing & healthy spiritual life.

Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!

- Metaphysical understanding of God, creation, the spiritual life, man, and Bible doctrine.
- Transcendent relationship with God rather than nominal relationship with God.

Stage 3

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!

- Still Nominal understanding of God. Increase in perinoetic truth about God & the spiritual life. However, still plagued with pagan philosophy in view of God’s nature due to lack of metaphysics, which is due to modernism’s philosophical assumptions. He has become more stable, but still very dependent on others for confidence in absolute truths.
- Orientation still more about words than the reality.

Stage 2

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Stage 1 – Christian baby = life of ups and downs.

- Utilitarian understanding of God.
- All baby believers have a great deal of pagan views of God due to pagan horizon of meaning. All baby believers are tossed here and there by kosmos diabolicus, Eph. 4:14.
- For baby believers it is primarily about pragmatism. In other words, if it works or feels good , they think it must be true.

Stage 1

Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview

(Epistemology: History-30 – Baconian-Reidian Hermeneutics)

1. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) set out to bring about a total reconstruction of the sciences and all human knowledge and put them on proper foundation, the Great Instauration.
 - He sets out to (1) sweep away metaphysics & deductive logic, (2) use induction to bring about utopia. He promoted a mechanistic view of creation and “man as a god to man” (NO 1:116, 129).
 - However, he did not understand the role of hypothesis and theory in scientific knowledge. He thought that all he had to do was gather the facts and they would speak for themselves. He was so against metaphysics that he thought that science could only advance if it avoided theories altogether. He never made any important scientific discoveries. His inductive system is simply too naïve.
 - The populist anti-intellectual wing of evangelicalism followed Bacon in discarding the past, metaphysics, and philosophy to begin afresh with induction—‘we build the Bible on facts not theory . . . This will bring unity to Christianity.’ His method was thought to provide the “science of Scripture.” To illustrate the naivety of this method consider the impossibility of teaching Bible doctrine on such subjects as God, the soul, the human intellect, the will, and the emotions simply from gathering all of the passages and let them speak for themselves *without the need of framework*.

However, the use of the original languages in addition to an inductive, Bible-only method, will provide a framework for proper and complete understanding of the Bible. True or False.

2. Thomas Reid (1561-1626), in his battles against the skepticism of David Hume, created Common Sense Realism (CSR), a “philosophy” based on common instincts of man.
- Both Reid and Bacon come together in our Declaration of Independence through Thomas Jefferson in the phrase: “*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*”
 - The difference between CSR and philosophical realism (PR) is that CSR “holds” self-evident truths as an instinct, without rational justification whereas PR gives rational and undeniable demonstration of these self-evident truths based on extra-mental reality and reason. However, CSR is the American and Christian way.
 - With the rejection of PR, the Baconian-Reidian became the hermeneutic of America and this also moved into subjective biblical studies in which Christians were blind to how their personal biases, perspectives, presuppositions and ungodly influences from culture shaped the way they inductively and “commonsensically” put the Bible pieces together—“common sense” such as methodological naturalism, deism, nominalism, devotionism, cultism, relativism.

When the Reformers proclaimed “sola Scriptura,” they meant Bible-only in an inductive, instinctive, non-theory approach as per promoted by Bacon and Reid. True or False

3. A core belief of Baconian induction was that it would bring great unity to a fragmented Christianity like “inductive science does” with scientists.
___ a. True
___ b. False
4. The core claim of Common Sense realism was that undeniable self-evident truths of *experience* provide a firm foundation upon which to build the edifice of true knowledge.
___ a. True
___ b. False
5. The Baconian-Reidian hermeneutic (BRH) had great appeal to the American newly born democratic nation for several reasons. However, now that America has grown up and has recognized the naivety of induction and common sense, the BRH is no longer the driving hermeneutic in the American mind regarding such things as race, politics, government, psychology, sex, morals, or science.
___ a. True
___ b. False

Love 7 (The will and intellect)

1. James: testing and love (review).

James 1:2 Consider it all joy (Πᾶσαν χαρὰν), my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be **perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.**

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those **who love Him.**

James 5:11 Behold, **we count those blessed** who endured. You have heard of the endurance of **Job** and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

2. James' (and Jesus') philosophical concepts of godliness, spirituality, human nature, happiness, blessedness, and the summum bonum of life is far different from modern man's, including Christian's. This is true on natural (philosophical) and supernatural levels. Thus, the need for Philosophical Realism. The summum bonum is nothing less than union with God Himself—by knowledge and by love.

1 Corinthians 13

1. Love for God and all that God loves is the hinge and submit of any and all spiritual virtues, 1 Cor. 13:1-13.
 - It is important to note that it is not the intellect that does any of these. It is not the intellect that is patient, kind, not jealous, not arrogant, rejoices with truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things,
 - It is the will not the intellect or even doctrine in the intellect that makes a person good. A good person has a good will. A bad person has a bad will.
 - The core of every single person is the will, not the intellect (cf., Abraham, David, Mary Magdalene, Solomon, Demas, and the Laodecians). We are our wills, our intellects are secondary with values only related to our wills.

2. Without love for God all of the spiritual gifts, doctrinal knowledge, faith, and self-sacrifices are worthless, 13:1-3.

3. The proper object and ultimate end of every act of love is God Himself. Moreover, this love for God and all that God loves is an act of the will, not the intellect.

4. Understanding the metaphysical structure of love requires understanding of the metaphysical structure of man's intellect, will, faith, virtue, and even emotions—and emotions do help us connect, to sympathize and empathize. Moreover, throughout the Word of God, love is a very active—it is never a passive attitude.

John 15:12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends, if you do what I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and shuts down his emotions, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

5. Although the will is *the* issue, the will never acts apart from the intellect, even when it suppresses the intellect.
- The will cannot love apart from antecedent cognition in the intellect. This means that the more perfectly we know God, the more perfectly we *can* love Him.
 - The more goodness we see in the Lord the more we *can* love Him.
 - There is no such thing as “intellectual” determinism as per Plato and gnosticism.
 - Review of the nature of freedom of the will as it works intricately with the intellect both now and when we are face-to-face with the Lord.

6. It is important to remember that *all* God-talk is analogous, not univocal or equivocal. We need to avoid defining God's love in terms of man's love. This means that God is not bound by human standards—He is not human.

7. Love for God requires a rightly ordered will, which requires a rightly ordered intellect. All sin and evil come from a badly ordered will and intellect. There are intelligent people who accept God and intelligent people who reject God for anti-intellectual reasons. There are intelligent people who are kind and good and there are intelligent people who look down on and mock others. It is all about the will. The will is the locus of personal agency, virtue, goodness, as well as evil and vice.

8. The virtue of love for God is characterized by a formal willingness to surrender to God and engage in right action—right will, right intellect, and right affections, Gen. 22 with James 2:23; Job 42:5-6; David vs. Saul; Romans 12:1-2. Refusal to surrender to God is demonstration of lack of love for God and is the essence of sin and evil and cursed. True love for God shapes our priorities and how we judge what is good in all of life.

1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love (φιλεῖ τὸν κύριον) the Lord, let him be accursed. Maranatha. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. 24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Revelation 3:15 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. 16 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of My mouth. 17 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

9. The good will always seeks good and moves and directs the intellect to focus on what its good. This all takes place with the concurrent activity of God in the intellect and will.
- Thus, the good will will be able to grasp God, love God, and enjoy longer and better fellowship with God than an orthodox believer with a bad will, which, by the way, will corrupt his doctrine.
 - A good will will see commitment to God as a good and be able to serve and enjoy God out of true love.
 - A good will will be the formal cause of attaining right thinking, right willing, and right affections/emotions.
 - Only God can truly solve man's divided self through the virtue of right thinking, right wishing, and right feelings. There is no resolution to man's divided commitments apart from the supernatural virtues.

10. The bad will chooses evil instead of God, which results in God concurrently handing that person's will over to its desires. All a person has to do is dislike or resist truth for whatever reason (tradition, comfort, etc.) to debase the will and turn out the lights regarding God and the things of God.

Rom. 1:23-28.

Matthew 6:21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22 "The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! 24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

2 Thessalonians 2:10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false,

11. The various virtues listed in 1 Cor. 13 are but different modes or manifestations of the supernatural virtue of love.
 - a. Love is longsuffering (μακροθυμεῖ), 1 Cor. 13:4. The virtue of patience is an act of the will, which gets its cognition from the intellect. We have enormous patience for those we really love. We have very little patience for those we dislike or hate. The power of love in perfecting virtue is in its ability to bring about right thinking, right willing, and right affections and right emotions. This avoids many of the sins and evils of anger, sadness, and bitterness.
 - b. Love is kind/merciful (χρηστεύεται), 13:4. Kindness is an act of the will. When we really love someone we are kind and merciful to them. When we do not love someone, we have bad thoughts about them. Consider the kindness of Christ, Matt. 5:43-48; 12:15-21; John 4:16-24. Christ was very kind to the weak but very confrontational with those in society who aggressively opposed and distorted the Word of God.

- c. Love does not envy (οὐ ζηλοῖ), 13:4. Lack of envy stems from virtue in the will, not the intellect. When we love someone, we do not envy what they possess. We are glad they have blessings to enjoy. Christ never envied the wealth of others, but the religious leaders envied Christ (Matt. 27:15-18). Consider the envy of politics as the poor are set against the rich, employees against employers, women against men. Envy is a breeding ground great evil. In love, the believer is perfectly satisfied with what God has provided.

- d. Love does no brag (οὐ περπερεύεται), 13:4. This is all about the will. A person who loves is a person with a good will which is not occupied with self. He is thinking of others. This is true humility as per Philip. 2:5-11. We all need the humility of Job as per 42:1-6. The vice of pride is manifested in the Pharisees in Matt. 23:1-8.

- e. Love is not arrogant (οὐ φυσιοῦται), 13:4. Again, this is all about the will. It is the will that decides to be arrogant, not the intellect. Arrogance is our greatest flaw. We all think more of ourselves than we ought. The only way to break that vice is by loving others.

- f. Love does not act unbecomingly (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ), 13:5. Again, this is an act of the will that decides to think of others. A loving person is always polite instead of pushy, selfish, or coarse in our speech, 1 Pet. 3:8-9

- g. Love does not seek its own (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς), 13:5. This, likewise, is not an act of the intellect or by doctrine in the soul. This is all about the will. When you love another person, it really is all about them. There is nothing wrong with seeking one's own, but there is everything wrong with only seeking one's own. See Christ's example in Philip. 2:5-11.

- h. Love is not provoked (οὐ παροξύνεται), 13:5. An act of the will, but like all acts of the will requires virtue. While anger in and of itself is not sinful (cf., Eph. 4:26-27; Jn 2:13-17), an angry or bitter disposition which has ill will is not love.
- i. Love does not think evil (οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν), 13:5. When someone thinks evil, it is because his will desires to focus on evil. In love you assume the best instead of thinking others have evil motives.
- j. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ), 13:6. The virtuous will loves righteousness and therefore has distaste for unrighteousness. One cannot love God and rejoice in evil since evil opposes God. Unrighteousness always leads to hostility to God, Rom. 1:28-32.

- k. Love rejoices in the truth (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ), 13:6. The good will loves truth because it loves the true, good, and beautiful. The bad will, at best, only likes truth for some practical benefit, for self.
- Love for God and the things of God cannot be separated from love of Truth. No one can love God apart from loving Truth.
 - God is not only the ground of love, He is the ground of Truth. We cannot love God and at the same time not love truth.
 - Jesus Christ came to bear witness to Truth, John 18:33-38. It was Christ's own commitment to Truth that motivated Him to fulfill all righteousness.
 - Christ loved truth because He loved His Father, Who is the Author of all truth.
 - Remember, Satan is the Father of lies who does everything he can to distort, twist, or conceal the truth.
 - The greatest problem in the human race is suppression of truth, Rom. 1:18-25.
 - The greatest problem in Christianity is suppression of Truth.

- l. Love bears all things (πάντα στέγει), 13:7. Love in the will has incredible power for great suffering. Love endures afflictions and suffering without complaining or whining.
- Only in love can one be blessed in persecution, Matt. 5:10-12. In such love God pours out His sanctifying grace on suffering believers.
- m. Love believes all things, hopes all things (πάντα πιστεύει, πάντα ἐλπίζει), 13:7. The good will is drawn to God and His Word and promises and really believes in the goodness of God.
- This refers to all things spoken by God. In love we embrace all that God says.
 - Note the connection between faith, hope, and love. They are mutually dependent.
 - Without love for God one is not inclined to believe or hope in God.

- n. 1 Corinthians 13:13 But now **abide** faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.,’ 13:13. **Abide**: The coupling of the three nouns with a verb in the singular demonstrate that in their depth and essence they are but one thing. They all work together.